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ABSTRACT

The California Art Education Association (CAEA) has outlined guidelines to help administrators, teachers, and others responsible for determining the acceptable content of visual arts courses offered to meet California's state graduation requirements or entry requirements into a state university. Emphasis for visual arts courses should be on the creative process supported by aesthetic perception, arts heritage, and aesthetic valuing. When appropriate, instruction should provide opportunities for integrating the visual arts with the performing arts, and other subjects, such as history-social science, English language arts, and science. Students also should be involved in reading-writing assignments, field trips, and exhibition programs in schools and in the community. Visual arts curricula and instructional strategies must encourage students to experiment, be flexible in seeking solutions to problems, and be courageous in expressing their own ideas. California State University guidelines are outlined together with examples of courses that meet and do not meet those requirements. The document concludes with a recommended check list of student outcomes for use in evaluating the content of visual arts courses. (KM)

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THIS IS ART

A POSITION ON HIGH SCHOOL VISUAL ARTS COURSES

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The Position of the California Art Education Association

It is the position of the California Art Education Association that the guidelines and specific check list of student outcomes presented here should be applied for certifying a course to grant visual arts credit for meeting the state graduation requirement of one course in a visual or performing art or one course in a foreign language. This paper is intended to assist school board members, district superintendents, administrators, curriculum developers, counselors, and teachers responsible for determining the acceptable content of visual arts courses offered to meet the state graduation requirement or for entry into a state university.

The success of any course offered as a basic visual arts course depends on the competence of the teacher assigned to that course. It is the CAEA's position that the teacher assigned to teach a course granting graduation credit for visual arts be a person with a credential to teach visual arts. Competence in teaching art requires skill and experience in creating art and in art criticism along with knowledge of the art and art history of cultures throughout the world.

Guidelines for Visual Arts Courses Meeting the High School Graduation Requirement

CAEA concurs with the four components for arts education established in the *Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve :* Aesthetic Perception, Creative Expression, Visual Arts Heritage, and Aesthetic Valuing. Determining the content of a visual arts course is critical, particularly since many students may not have the opportunity to take more than one visual arts course in high school. This course must, in the context of creating art, provide time for appreciating art, learning the history of art, and for the evaluation of art.

When appropriate, visual arts courses should provide instruction that integrats the other arts (dance, drama/theatre, and music) and correlates art with other subjects such as history-social science, English-language arts, and science. Reading, writing assignments, and research projects related to their art studies are a part of the course. Students should participate in art related activities, events, and field trips that involve them in the school community and make use of local resources. An exhibition program of student work should be developed both on the school site and in the community.

The emphasis for visual arts courses is on the creative process, which is supported by aesthetic perception, arts heritage, and aesthetic valuing. Visual arts curriculum and instructional stratigies must encourage students' efforts to experiment, to seek multiple solutions, to be flexible and willing to diverge from initial planning, and to be courageous in the expression of an individual idea. The course should provide the opportunity for students to trust and use their personal vision, experiences, and imagination in producing artwork to meet criteria established for the learning situation and the course.

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The concepts, knowledge, and skills gained in visual arts courses apply or are relevant to many areas of any student's present and future life, study, and work. Participation in visual arts courses gives students an opportunity to assess, with the assistance and expertise of the art teacher, their own artistic potential worthy of further pursuit or possible career. Additionally, the content of the course prepares students to participate in more advanced art study, to go on to other fields that might use artistic skills, and to become visually literate.

California State University Guidelines

The description of the California State University system's Visual and Performing Arts Admission Requirement offers guidelines in identifying acceptable visual arts courses. Their guidelines and list of acceptable visual arts courses follow:

1. Courses should provide students the opportunity to gain experience and knowledge in production and performance; analysis, interpretation, and evaluation; and historical and cultural aspects of visual and performing arts. Courses should combine theory and practice and include critical thinking skills. Purely recreational courses are not acceptable.
2. Students should complete courses within the same academic year and within the same discipline. Semester courses in different disciplines or in different years are acceptable but not recommended.

Examples of courses that meet the CSU Visual Arts Requirement:

Introduction to art, art appreciation, art history, art theory, art design (three-dimensional), drawing, painting, ceramics, sculpture, studio art, life drawing, printmaking, museum studies, photography, art production, architectural design,and ethnic art.

Examples of courses that do not meet the CSU Visual Arts Requirement:

Graphic art, yearbook, mechanical drafting, architectural drafting/drawing, computer graphics, calligraphy, cartooning, basic crafts (jewelry, knitting, weaving, needlepoint, macrame, stitchery, cake decorating, sewing), stained glass, advertising/fashion/interior design, furniture design, basic wood, plastics, silk screening, and design crafts.

Student Outcomes in Visual Arts

Following is a recommended check list of student outcomes to use in evaluating the content of visual arts courses. It is intended to be used for certifying a course to grant visual arts credit for meeting the graduation requirement (one course in a visual or performing arts or one course in a foreign language). It is also intended to be used to determine whether a course offered as an alternative to taking a visual arts course to meet the graduation requirement offers the essentials of a visual arts course. The CAEA recommends that students taking a course granting visual arts credit for graduation achieve all of the following outcomes:

Aesthetic Perception: Visual and Tactile

The CAEA recommends that a course granting visual arts credit be designed so that students accomplish all of the following outcomes. Students:

- Recognize and are able to distinguish and discuss, with increased fluency, visual and tactile differences and similarities found in works of art, nature, and the environment.
- Develop problem solving skills as they learn how to apply the techniques of art to their own experinece.
- In their discussions, use the vocabulary associated with the technical and expressive qualities of the object or events, as well as the elements of art and principles of composition.

Creative Expression

The CAEA recommends that a course granting visual arts credit be designed so that students accomplish all of the following outcomes. Students:

of communication.

Ernest L. Boyer
President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

- Develop and use skills with visual arts media that are needed to translate their ideas, thoughts, or feelings into an artwork.
- Apply the elements of art and the principles of design to creating artwork in two- and/or three-dimensional form.
- Analyze their personal creative process and recognize how it applys to solving problems in other areas of their lives.
- Display their artwork in a setting where it will be valued for its aesthetic qualities.

Visual Arts Heritage

The CAEA recommends that a course granting visual arts credit be designed so that students accomplish all of the following outcomes. Students:

- Research and discuss the visual artwork and artists of cultures throughout the world, past and present.
- Consider the content and context in which the artwork was created, recognizing the cultural and conceptual similarities and differences in the expression.
- Identify the role of art and artists in past and present societies and state how art has meaning and significance in their own life, artwork, and in the world.
- Become familiar with the community sites where art is presented (museums, galleries, alternative spaces, public installations).

Aesthetic Valuing

The CAEA recommends that a course granting visual arts credit be designed so that students accomplish all of the following outcomes. Students:

- Develop skills for making aesthetic judgments about their own work and the artwork of others and demonstrate the ability to apply and defend these judgments.
- Participate in critiques of their own artwork and the works of others.
- Identify how skills in aesthetic judgment apply to their lifelong involvement in and appreciation of the visual arts in their personal lives and in the community environment.
- Read, analyze, and discuss philosophies of art and aesthetic issues.

We do not need more and better arts education to develop more and better artists. We need more and better arts education to produce better educated human beings, citizens who will value and evolve a worthy American civilization.

Charles Fowler

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Foreword

The mission of visual arts educators in California is to provide all students with learning opportunities that promote personal expression and the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the visual arts. Participation in the visual arts offers unique situations in which students may develop and demonstrate their cognitive and affective skills, critical modes of thought, cultural values and beliefs, and their comprehension of self and others. The study of historical and contemporary art and the creating of art professes values inherent in a democracy: appreciating diversity, making informed decisions, and being able to express individual vision. Aesthetic awareness is intrinsic to art education and needs to be developed, nurtured, and encouraged in all students so that the quality of both their personal and community life is enhanced.

The California Art Education Association is committed to strengthening visual arts education in all grades for all students. This position paper represents part of that commitment by presenting guidelines and a check list of student outcomes for determining an effective visual arts education in high school.

Jean Neelen-Siegel, President, 1989—991

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Resources

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Toward Civilization: A Report on Arts Education. Washington, D.C.: The National Endowment for the Arts, 1988.

Why We Need the Arts: 8 Quotable Speeches by Leaders in Education, Government, Business and the Arts. New York: American Council for the Arts, 1989.

DOCUMENTS

The following state documents for planning arts programs and art courses are available from the California Department of Education, Bureau of Publications, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95802-0271, telephone (916) 445-1260. For California residents, please add sales tax to price indicated.

The Handbook for Planning a Visual and Performing Arts Program, 1990. ($6.00). This document is available through the Tulare County Department of Education, County Civic Center, Visalia, CA 93291, telephone (209) 733-6326.

The California State Board of Education Policy on Arts Education, 1989. Available from the History-Social Science and Visual and Performing Arts Unit listed below.

Program Quality Review for High Schools, 1989. ($4.50)

Strengthening the Arts in California Schools: A Design for the Future, 1990. ($4.50)

Technology in the Curriculum, Visual and Performing Arts Resource Guide, 1987, ($30.00)

Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, printed, 1989. ($6.00)

Curriculum frameworks for History-Social Science, English-Language Arts, Foreign Language, Mathematics, and Science are also available for assistance in planning correlated units and lessons.

ORGANIZATIONS

The California Art Education Association, 1217 Linda Vista Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91103.

The California Arts Project, Marin County Office of Education, P.O. Box 4925, San Rafael, CA 94913.

The California Department of Education, History-Social Science and Visual and Performing Arts Unit, 721 Capitol Mall, P.O. Box 944272, Sacramento, CA 94244-2720.

The National Art Education Association, 1916 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1590.

The National Arts Education Research Center, New York University, 26 Washington Place, Room 21, New York, N.Y. 10003.

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